

# COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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"Comparing our present state with that which we were in some time ago, let me ask the House, "whether they do not feel themselves very much in the situation of mariners, just escaped from the dangers of a tremendous storm, and looking back upon the scarcely subsiding waves, with emotions of calm delight and unspeakable satisfaction? Let gentlemen turn their eyes on their present happy situation, on the vessel of state, having now weathered the storm, and riding in triumph and security in her native haven of peace; and then let them say, if some credit be not due to him who steer'd her unjewed to this blessed haven; through a sea so threatening, so awful, and so tempestuous."—LORD BELGRAVE'S (now Earl Grosvenor) SPEECH ON 21st MAR, 1801.

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## ON THE MINISTERIAL PLAN OF DEFENCE.

### LETTER III.

July 10, 1803.

My dear Sir,—In my two last letters, I sent you some strictures on the ministers' plan for raising 50,000 men for the defence of the country; a measure which, at that moment, seemed to engross all the attention of Parliament, and much of the anxiety of the people out of doors. For my own part, however, I am very ready to allow, that I have to that measure other and much more serious objections, than those which I then urged: objections to the very essence and principle of the measure.—I object to it as being manifestly part of a system of warfare, purely and solely defensive; and I object further to it, as being very inadequate and insufficient to answer the purpose of mere defence.—If the country is in that imminent danger of invasion, which ministers tell us that it is, and which no persons, however inadequate their exertions are to the danger and difficulty of such an event, pretend to deny, I do assert, that this measure is more calculated to increase the danger than to diminish it. The strongest advocate for this plan must admit, that it will be of no use or benefit whatever, it can be of none, unless it is fully completed before we have occasion to use it; unless Buonaparté waits till we are ready to repel him, before he attacks us; and, I ask those how long that will be? Let that question be answered by those only who know all the tediousness, and all the delays attendant on the mode of raising men, now proposed to be adopted, and then, further, by those who are able to judge how long it will take to render the men so raised steady good soldiers.—The authors of this plan seem to have entirely left out of their consideration the possibility of his attack, before we are ready. Now, if he should chance on this occasion to be so absurd as not to have patience enough so to wait; if he should happen to act with his usual promptitude and vigour, and follow up by a grand blow his threats of invasion, then, in what a situation

shall we be placed!—So much attention has been paid to this Army of Reserve, that nothing else has been even thought of.—People seem to imagine, that, with this force, in addition to our present regular army and militia, we shall be able, beyond all doubt, entirely to defeat and destroy the invading army at once; that they will never be able to penetrate above a few miles from the coast; that one battle will be immediately decisive, that that one battle we shall gain, and that as soon as that is done, all our dangers will be over; we shall have no more attacks to dread, the enemy being so disconcerted at the failure of this first attempt as to be quite afraid to renew it.—This really seems to me, without any exaggeration, the present idea of the manner in which the thing is to pass; and if it does so go on, very well, I shall be as much pleased as any one; but all that I could suggest, is an *if*, an unfortunate *if*; if it should so happen that the farce should not go on regularly, if some of the actors should forget their parts, if the scene-shifters should happen to be out of the way, or remiss, or in liquor, if the prompter should be missing or asleep, if any of these things were to happen, what then? Why then, this farce would become a most bloody tragedy, in its progress most calamitous, probably, at its close most fatal. And here let me remark, that ministers seem to me, throughout this business, to act like foolish speculators, who are constantly building what are called, castles in the air, in the composition of which, they never once suffer themselves to believe that any thing will turn out otherwise than as favourably as possible.—They always calculate on winning at every cast, and if they are disappointed in any one instance, the whole edifice is immediately overthrown. This seems to me to be exactly the case with ministers. Supposing, as they suppose, that the enemy will wait till we are prepared before he attacks us, that the new raised men in addition to the present existing forces will then be quite able and sufficient, in the first instance, not to defeat only, but to cut in pieces and absolutely destroy his army, that there is not the

smallest danger of failure, nor the smallest cause of apprehension from co-operation or assistance from within (a chance, which seems scarcely to have occurred to any one, and which is too dreadful for me to do any thing but merely hint at now; though after the experience of the last war, and the state trials last spring, ministers are culpable in deed, if they have not taken every possible precaution against it) that this first attempt of the enemy will so deter him, that he will never venture to renew it: supposing that all these things turn out thus favourably, and supposing, that they certainly know that it will be so, then no fault is to be found with them for their conduct. But, if there is a possibility that any one of these chances should turn up unfavourably, then I do assert that they have betrayed the country.— Now, for myself, I must say, that I think a wiser and more judicious conduct in ministers, would have been, to have foreseen the probability of this expectation being in some parts at least disappointed, and the possibility of its failing in all, and then to have taken measures accordingly. But how do we stand now? Expecting that the enemy will be repelled or destroyed at once, that he will never get many miles into the country (and government have made no provision for the contrary event) they have not prepared any means for annoying them in their progress if they should proceed, they have not prepared any means of removing out of their reach the helpless, the infirm, the old men, the women and children, and they have not prepared any mode of carrying away what will be useful and convenient for them to find both for their own sustenance, and our annoyance. Nay, with the possibility that there exists, of the enemy reaching and taking possession of the capital, in which case plunder will be their first object, the second, the gratification of every brutal passion of the soldiery, with this possibility, which no one will, I think, dispute after the authority by which it has been maintained, and under the event, of which, I hope, no one could be base enough to think even of averting all the consequent calamities by any submission, with this possibility staring them in the face, have ministers taken no one step to aards providing means of conveyance to places of safety, for about five hundred thousand helpless mortals in that capital, who must be removed, or suffer all the cruelties and indignities usually inflicted by a French pillaging army, and for all the wealth, all the arms, all the valuable papers, and archives that it contains. They will, perhaps, say, that I assume the premi-

ses, that they have not taken these measures, I admit that I do assume them, and I assert that I have a right to do so; for these measures would, doubtless, if prepared, be made public. This I am sure of, they ought to be made public, and as public as possible, and as speedily as possible, and for this reason, that they are of scarcely any use at all (I had almost said of no use) unless so published. There has not even been a place pointed out by government, as a place of safety and convenience, to which, in such an event, those who could remove themselves should go. What will be the necessary consequence, but this? That in case such an event seems approaching, the greatest confusion will ensue; and those will escape who can provide themselves, either by fair means or foul, by money or by force, with carriages and horses to transport them; some will run one way, some another; each one will impede and obstruct his neighbour, and all will obstruct the measures which government will then be inclined to take. The result will be, that many will be left behind; and many of those that escape, will escape, without, perhaps, the means of supporting their lives for many hours. But, if proper measures had been prepared, and known, what would have been the consequence of that? In the first place, the eyes of many persons now blind to the danger, and who laugh at it, would have been opened; secondly, there would have ensued a great additional confidence in government: thirdly, people would have been prepared for the event; and by having the idea constantly before them, would have formed all their plans, and, when the event came, would have exactly known how they were to act: fourthly, it would have been, I conceive, no small satisfaction to those who may be fighting on the coast, to know, that, even if they should fall, those who are most dear to them would not be without protection and defence: and, fifthly, it would have been no little discouragement to the enemy to make the attempt. If he knows that he shall be able to gratify neither the avarice nor the passions of his soldiers in that capital; that the taking possession of it will only gain him the command of so many brick houses, and, that he must, to obtain his object, make further progress, get the better of new difficulties, conquer new opposition; he will certainly be less eager to march to that capital, and less willing to hold up to his troops the promise, that the possession of it would be the term and limit of all their toils and labours. Indeed, I know no better mode of deterring an enemy from an attack,

than by proving to him, not only that we are prepared to resist it; but what is much more unpleasant to him, as it requires much more fortitude and courage on the other side; namely, that we are prepared to bear up against the worst that can happen, rendering every victory not only as dear-bought, but as little profitable as possible. In short, every measure for our own security and defence that we take, tends to diminish the danger that threatens us. But then it must be, both in one view and in the other, not a mere fantastical display of patriotic sentiments and resolutions in newspapers, but a real, *bond fide* resolution and determination; displayed not so much by words as by deeds, not by proclaiming that we will sacrifice every thing for this end, but by betaking ourselves to such measures as will prove, that we are not only willing to sacrifice all for the obtaining of this end, but, also, ready at this very moment to sacrifice a great deal to gain us the best chance of fighting for that object with advantage.—With respect to such measures, as I have above alluded to, I have, within these few days, seen in the public prints an account of some resolutions voted by a meeting of the gentlemen of Kent, called together by the Lord Lieutenant for the purpose of considering what steps ought to be taken for the public security in case of invasion, which resolutions are, in their outlines and general plan, conformable to the ideas laid down in an excellent little pamphlet lately published by Mr. Norton Pitt, the Member for Dorsetshire; which ideas, he states to have been put in practice, during the last war, in that county. These proceedings are, I think, very good, and reflect great credit on those concerned in bringing them forward; but, I maintain, that in such emergencies as the present, government ought not to leave these things to the exertions of individuals, however zealous, patriotic, or able; but should lay down some one general plan, to be acted upon in all counties, and by all persons. The above proceedings may be very useful, and I believe they are, not only in the immediate consequence, but in their secondary ones, of exciting similar exertions in other places, and in government itself. But, I conceive, that nothing but the total inefficiency and inertness of ministers could authorize individuals to come thus forward upon plans of their own; when the stake which depends upon the goodness and solidity of the plan is so great. In the present case the individuals are right, and most commendable for doing it, and the government is most grossly negligent of their duty for allowing themselves

to be anticipated by them.—In another point of view, I have a fundamental objection to the plan of the Army of Reserve, as being manifestly part of a system of pure defence, to which I do object, *in toto*, as being not only most absurd, not only as least likely, even in any case, to obtain peace and tranquillity for the country, not only as being, by itself, in this case totally inadequate to defending the country, but as necessarily, and from the very essence and nature of the system, destructive, and ruinous. I do assert, that such a system must destroy the country in a very short time; and the better the system (as a system of defence) the more complete it is, and the more likely to answer its object, the surer and the speedier will the ruin come; and I assert, further, that no such system, supposing it the best, and most complete, and most effectual possible, will ever be able, as we are now situated, even to answer its own end, will never be able to defend this country. These two propositions then are to be proved.—  
1. That a defensive system is ruinous; and ruinous in proportion as the system itself is complete. Now I will concede, which is much more than I am at all bound to concede, that a defensive war is not more likely than an offensive to damp the zeal, and to lower the spirits of a people, to make them look on war as the greatest of all calamities on account of its burthens, and to make them dread not even French dominion in comparison with it. For, I have myself no doubt, that the burdens of a defensive war, without any thing to enliven or to animate the people, (and these too, as in the present case, burthens that are to cease with the war,) operating on the lowness and want of spirit, which at present prevails amongst Englishmen, will very soon tend to make people believe, that of all the calamities on earth the most dreadful is a war with France. Of this however, I will now take no account. It is not to our spirit only, not to our courage only, not to our honour, or fair fame, or credit in the world, but to what I fear, now-a-days, are esteemed of much more value than all these things, to our finances and our pockets, that I maintain, that this war of defence must be ruinous; by burthening the state with enormous expenses it will be ruinous; it will be ruinous too, by drying up the very sources of our wealth, our agriculture, and our manufactures; for these sources are to supply the men for the defence of the country, as also they, ultimately, are to supply ~~the~~ money, and both together will be such a drain upon the vitals of the country, as no strength will be able to bear.

Such a draining blister, co operating with so violent a dysentery, will soon bring the most robust constitution to the last stages of debility. For, you must observe, too, this is all expense without any return, all outgoings without any incomings; you will never get the most insignificant sugar-island to increase your means, not the plunder of the poorest sea port town in France to assist you; scarcely, after the first six months, a single prize on the seas to enrich your sailors. —2. I am to prove that no defensive system, as a defensive system, can defend this country. This may seem paradoxical, but I assert it is nevertheless true. For omitting to urge, (no very small or unimportant observation, however) that it is physically impossible to have all our coasts so defended by batteries, and lined with soldiers, as in every spot, where an attack could be made, to ensure success; and, that if the enemy should happen to hit upon the weak point, may give us a mortal blow before we have had time to collect a thousand men to oppose him; omitting all this, I ask what we shall have gained, supposing we repel with the most signal success any given number of attacks which he chooses to make? The number repelled shall be as great, and the success as complete as any one can wish to state it; and then we shall have gained nothing at all, except the destruction of so many men, and of so many vessels; which, to the enemy, is *nothing at all*; and which, besides, will probably be compensated by a proportionate loss on our side. I put this in this way, because I find that people, who, a very few days ago, reprobated any one who mentioned the bare possibility of an invasion as gloomy and desponding; these people are now become all at once so valorous, that nothing will now content them, but that the enemy, and Buonaparté himself in person should come; that, say they, he may get a good dressing, and be convinced that he has no chance of succeeding in any attack on this country. Now I, who was one of those desponding persons before, but who was very desirous that some measure should be adopted to prevent the attack, am now left far far behind by these courageous knights, and am very ready to state, that instead of wishing them to come, I by all means wish them to stay away; and am most anxious that they should be prevented from coming. These gentlemen are so desirous of having a tussle with them, that I rather think that they would ~~see our citizens~~, instead of attacking them ~~so early~~ and ~~as~~ ~~soon~~ as they come in sight. —3. I do not wish to see a French army in England.

putting out of the question, which by no means should in point of reason be forgotten, viz. all the bloodshed and calamity, that such an event, even terminating in the way these gentlemen wish, would create; and supposing, (and the thing is certainly possible) the event should not be that, and, that instead of Buonaparté getting a dressing, we should get half a dozen counties plundered and ravaged, I think those who are now so desirous of an invasion being tried would look a little sheepish. But, after all, the reason for this wish is the most foolish and the most ridiculous part of the whole: viz. that the enemy might be convinced, that he has no chance of success. How will he be convinced of this? Will any man in his senses be one jot more convinced of this after that event, than he is now? I say no. He will be convinced, for he will know, that this attempt has failed; but, will that prove that a larger expedition, better timed, made on a better plan, under other circumstances, with better generals, would be equally unsuccessful? And where, I pray, have these gentlemen learned that Buonaparté or any jacobin chief is so easily turned away from his projects, (and from projects, too, the accomplishing of which is so necessary to his safety and credit, and to the existence of the sect as the destruction of England is now become) as to be afraid of making a second attempt when the first has failed! Oh! say they, but then we shall prevent the second; the new-raised men will doubtless, all volunteer themselves for general service, and we will immediately begin offensive operations. This is very well, but it is another castle in the air, when there is no provision made for any bad throw. Suppose they should not volunteer, (and if they do, some little time may chance to be lost by complying with all the legal forms of proceeding,) or suppose we should not know where or how to send them, (and to judge from the past to the future, I dare say, his Majesty's present ministers will never begin thinking about that till the very moment,) or, lastly, suppose the enemy should not let us, but should force us to keep every man and musket at home by rumours of new expeditions, or by an actual attack in another quarter. And who will say that this will not happen, or who will say that this may not go on so, for ever, till either the troops are all destroyed which can be furnished by a population of 70 millions, or till his means of building boats are exhausted, which will happen about the same time; or, lastly, till the power of Buonaparté is destroyed? For, I believe, that this is what people reckon.

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upon; and, if they had good ground to expect it, I should think they reckoned very well indeed; and it is ground too, as I shall presently show, which might be made as solid and as firm as a rock, if people choose to set about it in the right way, but which, as they pretend to use it, is a mere morass in which any edifice they may build upon it will soon sink and disappear. They reckon truly on the unpopularity, which these frequent failures of his expeditions will occasion, and the anger that they will raise in the breasts of the soldiers against him, as if he was less popular amongst the French troops, or in France in general, for the complete and entire failure of, and for his desertion from the expedition to Egypt, as if he were less popular on account of the complete failure (as we are told it is) of the expedition to St. Domingo, or less able to send more troops to them, because all these who have hitherto gone there have miserably perished. This is a foundation of sand, indeed, which will, I fear, in the hour of danger, when the winds blow and the storms beat, miserably disappoint those who rely upon it.—It is, then, perfectly reasonable to look forward with very confident hope to the effect of the destruction of the power of the present First Consul of France. But before you look to the effect of that destruction, you must first consider the means of destroying it. Now the means these gentlemen have in view are most fallacious. I think, however, I can point out some to you perfectly good and valid. The following opinions are neither perfectly new nor originally mine, but being broached in public very little of late, and, I think, in general, very much lost sight of, I shall state them to you at some length. They had never recurred to my mind since the breaking out of the present war, till, one day, meeting with our friend —, whose politics are still as different from mine as ever, we had, as usual, a discussion on that subject; in the course of which he told me, that he had been the preceding day in the House of Commons, where he had heard some of Mr. Burke's old doctrines about the King of France broached, I believe, by Lord Folkestone. "All these Burkites and "Wludhamites," says he, "must certainly "be mad. What do you think Lord F. said "in the House last night?—That the best "way of defending the country and pre- "venting an invasion would be to make a "declaration of our intention to support "the claim of the King of France." Since that time I have thought a good deal upon the subject, and am quite convinced of the

truth of the above proposition.—I think a great deal of the success of such a measure would depend on the manner of doing it; particularly after the events of the last war, and especially after the late disgraceful treaty of Amiens. The best mode in my mind, would clearly be, the most frank, most open, most unequivocal, and most undisguised. This would be the most honourable, and, I think, upon principles less praise-worthy, the most efficacious. It would give the best pledge of our sincerity and truth; of which I am sorry to say I fear, there wogld be entertained much doubt, and doubt founded on good reason too; if the declaration were not of that description. If there was the least opening left for quibble or doubt, it every thing was not as fair, as it could by any possibility be made, you may rest assured, that, after the treachery of which this country was guilty by the peace of Amiens, there is not a statesman in Europe who will not believe, that that omission is purposely designed as a loop-hole, in case our interest should incline us to take advantage of it. The declaration must then, of absolute necessity, be of the description I have mentioned. Being of that description I ask, what will be its consequences? And I maintain—1. It will astonish, and by astonishing raise admiration for our disinterestedness and courage, give confidence in our promises and esteem for our character in every Cabinet in Europe. These things we once possessed: by the trea'y of Amiens they were completely lost, and it is absolutely necessary for our well-being, that we should regain them.—2. It would give spirit and energy to the people of this country. I know there is a common cant that the people would not bear to fight for the family of the Bourbons. In the first place I deny, that it would be what this seems to assume, a gratuitous favour to the House of Bourbon; we are fighting against a mortal enemy who wishes to destroy us; his victims would therefore, naturally, be our friends; but, beyond all doubt, those whose name, or influence, or situation, makes them most formidable to him, when brought forward, it is for our interest to bring as forward as possible. But, besides this, I deny that any one has any right to assume the indisposition of the people to replace King Lewis XVIII. on the throne. I for one, for the sake of the country, should be very willing to contribute my share towards doing it, and I know not why any one should not, except those who think that monarch would be as formidable

a foe, as the revolutionary, jacobinical usurper Buonaparté! This is assuredly not my opinion, even if the king were on the throne, commanding all the millions of men, and wielding all the power of Buonaparté. And this is meant as no compliment to the Consul, or slur upon the King: of the latter I have some reason to have the highest opinion, both of his head and his heart; of the other I have the meanest and most contemptible opinion possible: he is, I believe, the poorest and least formidable man on the face of the earth, but it is the power of the revolutionary government which is formidable. "C'est la révolution "qui marche," said Mallet du Pan, six years ago, and so it is to the present day: it is not this man or that man that rules, "c'est "la révolution qui marche," and the figures that appear on the stage are mere automata, mere machines moved about and directed by hidden springs. But, as I shall show by and by, I think the question would be between the Consul with his present power, and the King with that power greatly diminished; and then, I think, even those who hesitate about the answer in the first case, would not hesitate in the second.— But to return from this digression: I maintain that it would give spirit and energy to the people of this country, in as much as it would be a desirable object. The advantage of having such an object, I believe, immense. Every one knows how difficult it is to walk in a straight line, unless he has something in view to which he may direct his steps. The ablest pilot could not steer straight across the narrowest strait, without some point in view before him: so is it in the affairs of nations, and in war. If you have no defined object you deviate from the straight course; if you have one, then all your views and all your attention are directed to it. A very distant object in sight is always much more animating than one much nearer that you knew nothing of. But it will be said, we have an object without this, our own security. True: that is the ultimate end, no doubt; but there is no defined point, at which you will be sure to have attained that end. The mariner too has an object, to get to the opposite shore, but that will not prevent him from wandering from his track unless he has in view something more discernable. I protest I do not see the slightest difference between the two cases.—3. The effect it would have in France, first, on the people of that country, and, secondly, upon the government, is not the least important consequence of such a declaration as I propose. On the people,

if they are so harassed and so tyrannized over as they are represented to be; if they are so galled by the yoke of the tyrant, and so goaded by the idea that that tyrant is an usurper, a foreigner, and a Corsican, must they not be ready to rise in support of the claim of their old and respected monarch. I assure you that I have good reason to believe, that if his standard were once erected manfully and firmly, we should see no less than half the population of France ready to join it. He would of course be joined by every royalist in the country, every good, and loyal and faithful subject remaining in France; he would be joined by all those who are discontented with the present tyrannical government, it would immediately decide the wavering and doubtful, insure the co-operation of many whom former crimes must exclude from all hopes of pardon, but on the score of later and eminent services. I repeat that I do not doubt that half the population of France would join the royal standard. The effect it would have on the ruler of France would be no less striking and important. It would at once disturb all his operations, and palsy all his exertions. Conscious of the abhorrence in which he is held, he would be afraid to trust any man. His favourite regiment, his dearest aide-de-camp, his most confidential general, would become to him objects of suspicion and fear. What assurance could he have that any one of them might not feel some qualm of conscience for his rebellions, treasons and blasphemies, and betray him? What security would he feel against the anger of an injured and insulted people, or the fury of a disappointed army? One enthusiastic loyalist throwing his hat in the air and crying "Vive le Roi" would be more formidable to him than 600,000 men drawn up, not on the coasts of Britain, but landed on the shores of France. What expeditions do you think he would then send out? Could he send reinforcements to St. Domingo? Could he have invaded Hanover if this measure had been attempted in time? "What would it profit him, if he gain the whole world, but lose his own soul?" But, above all, would he in this case think of an invasion against this country, when he knows, that we are active in upholding the rights and asserting the claims of his lawful sovereign, the legitimate monarch of those whom he sends to invade us? Or, would not they be very apt to suffer their hatred against England to be smothered by their hatred against him, and by their love for their lawful prince, and to be much more ready to join

his standard and return under his banners to assert his cause, and wreak their vengeance on the Corsican, than to expose themselves to destruction by assisting an iniquitous and unjust cause.—These, I doubt not, would be the effects of the measure if properly adopted. The manner in which I would do it, I must reserve for another opportunity, as I find this epistle swelled almost to the size of a volume. I cannot, however, delay saying a word or two on the common objection against such plans, as the one just mentioned—“That it is all romance and chivalry, and, though very honourable to its advocates, very ill adapted to the present times and present manners.” I confess that, for myself, I do not like it the less, if it partake a little of that romantic spirit of chivalry, which was nothing more nor less than a high and spirited sense of honour, but I deny, that this plan is necessarily liable to such an imputation, or rather to such a commendation. It certainly may be taken up on that ground: I should be very willing to take it up on that ground myself, and to applaud any other person who did so: and I think, the more it were so taken up, the better it would be for the country and the more effectual in itself. But, romantic as I may be, I am not romantic enough to expect that. I am not mad enough to expect of the country one expression of sympathy, or of honourable feeling towards the unfortunate victims of jacobin rage; but, I do think, that it is not too much to expect of the country when it can be proved, and it is proved to it, that the method pointed out is the best and the wisest, and the cheapest mode of doing the work in which they are engaged; when it is proved, that it will perfectly defend them from the attacks against which they are making so much preparation, that it will provide them with allies without subsidies or the delays of negotiation, now that we are so much in need of them, and with auxiliary troops of the best kind and in the greatest abundance, without either pay or bounty, now that we are so much in want of soldiers; when this is proved, I say, I do not think it is too much to expect, that they will not reject the plan merely because it is honourable, that they will not refuse to follow the path pointed out by their own interest, only because it is likewise that which leads to glory, that, in short, they will not refuse to benefit themselves merely because there is also a chance that they may benefit an unfortunate and excellent prince, than whom none is more deserving of esteem and respect.—I am, &c.

INQUISITOR.

#### ST. DOMINGO.

SIR,—I have already expressed my ideas, as to the means to be taken of separating that immense and invaluable Colony St. Domingo, for ever from France; and, I should hope, that if government should not have already taken this most important subject into consideration, no farther time will be lost in carrying into effect some such measures as those which I have pointed out.—To you, Sir, I need not say that France still cherishes the hope of being hereafter enabled again to cope with the navy of this country; because, it is a fact which you well know; yet without foreign commerce, and a great commercial marine, she will never be able to accomplish this project; unless, indeed, we sink into a state of indolence and voluptuousness, which, from the present rage for luxury and dissipation, there is but too much reason to fear.—The first and principal source of French navigation, before the late war, was that which she derived from St. Domingo, consequently, every rational effort should now be made on our part to deprive France for ever of it; and there certainly appears to me to be no mode better calculated to effect that end, than the one I have pointed out in my former letter. In an account you published soon after the Preliminary Treaty of London, you stated the population of St. Domingo, before the war, at 578,623; the ships employed in carrying on the trade with that Island at 1040, making 318,015 tons, navigated by 26,770 men; so that by this statement, compared with the statement you gave at the same time of the population of the whole of the British West India Islands, and of the shipping, tonnage, and men trading thither, the single Island of St. Domingo exceeded the whole of our possessions, in population, by 57,734 souls; in tonnage by 20,763, and in seamen navigating that tonnage by 3,709. Although your statement respecting St. Domingo is taken from good authority, yet I am strongly inclined to believe, that the number of men employed in the French St. Domingo trade, was considerably more (great as you have stated it to be) than what appears by your account; but, admitting that you have given the total number, and that my opinion is not correct, you will perceive, that the seamen formerly employed by France in that branch of her navigation, was, reckoning 600 seamen for a ship of the line, more than sufficient to man 44 sail of line of battle ships, which, at the commencement of the late war, was just one half of her fleet, and just the whole of what she

now possesses.—It is true, that the destructive and sanguinary warfare that has been carried on, almost without intermission, for these last ten years in St. Domingo, has very much diminished the population of that country, for so it may be called from its vast extent, value, and importance. In addition to this circumstance respecting the population, there is not scarcely a sugar work remaining; these works were destroyed by the Blacks, principally by Christophe, who murdered the white inhabitants on the plantations; of course, for some few years to come, and until the sugar works and the plantations should be restored to their former state, even supposing Buonaparté's efforts to subdue the negroes crowned with success, the navigation could not be brought to the extent and magnitude it had reached previous to the late war.—Let it also be remembered, that prior to the late war, France possessed only one half of St. Domingo, but that upon the Definitive Treaty of Amiens, she became the acknowledged sovereign of the whole island, in conformity to the cession made to her by Spain of the half which that nation possessed before the conclusion of the peace of Basle in 1795, when Spain ceded the entire sovereignty of St. Domingo to France. Since, therefore, as it evidently appears, France employed such an immense navigation with only the one half of St. Domingo, how much more may it not be fairly imagined she would employ in the space of ten or even five years, in her intercourse with the whole of that extensive and fertile country should she be enabled but once more to reduce the blacks to subjection.—I have been led to expatiate on the subject of St. Domingo in the hope of impressing more strongly the absolute necessity of exerting our utmost endeavours to deprive France for ever of it. As to any danger of establishing a black empire, that seems now to be considered as it ought to have been five years ago, at which time Toussaint was in the plenitude of his authority, and when we might, had we but seen our true policy, have confirmed him in the government of the whole island, and thereby not only have secured to ourselves, almost the whole of the advantages to be derived from a commercial and maritime intercourse with St. Domingo, but have entirely deprived France, both of the sovereignty and of any share of the trade of it. I only now pray that we may profit by experience, and that this opportunity, (like the former) may not be suffered to escape. My great apprehension, however, is, that Buonaparté, foreseeing the

utter impossibility of prosecuting his views of conquest in St. Domingo, while engaged in hostility against this country, may have concluded the treaty with the blacks, to which I have alluded in my former letter;\* but even this ought not to prevent our immediately entering into a communication with the black chieftains, who might easily be convinced, from the superiority of our navy, and by all intercourse being cut off between St. Domingo and France, that it is to Great Britain they must look for supplies of money, of cloathing, of manufactures, and of provisions, in return for the produce of their country, and that we neither look to the possession of their seaports or to any other advantages than those to which we shall be justly entitled as fair traders and as their best friends.

*A Friend to my Country.*

#### PUBLIC PAPERS.

##### *Explanatory Note of the wish of the Commander in Chief.*

*Bremen, June 6.*—The General in Chief commanding the French Army in Hanover, relying on the amicable dispositions of the City of Bremen towards the French Republic, conceives he may place implicit confidence in the Senate for the execution of the following dispositions:—He demands. — I. That an Embargo be immediately put on all English vessels. — II. That all English Officers and Sailors be immediately sent to the French Army. — III. That the Merchants of the City make a declaration of the merchandize belonging to the English, which are consigned to them.—Also their situation with regard to their English Correspondents.

##### *Notice of the Blockade of the Elbe by Great-Britain.* *Dated Downing-Street, July 2d.*

The King has been pleased to cause it to be signified by the Right Honourable Lord Hawkesbury, His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to the Ministers of Neutral Powers residing at this Court, that the necessary measures having been taken by His Majesty's command for the Blockade of the entrance of the river Elbe, in consequence of the forcible occupation of parts of the banks of that river by the French troops; the said river is declared to be in a state of blockade; and that from this time all the measures authorised by the law of nations and the respective treaties between His Majesty and the different Neutral Powers will be adopted and executed with respect to all vessels which may attempt to violate the said blockade. Lord Hawkesbury has been further commanded by His Majesty to signify to the Ministers of the Neutral Powers, that whenever the French troops evacuate the positions which they now occupy on parts of the Elbe, and will remove at such a distance from them as to leave the course of that river perfectly free and secure to the vessels of his subjects, as well as of other nations, His Ma-

\* See Register, present volume, p. 33.

jesty will immediately direct his ships of war which may be stationed at the mouth of the river Elbe, for the purpose of blockading the same, to be withdrawn.

### INTELLIGENCE.

**FOREIGN.**—The Capitan Pacha, whose departure from Constantinople was mentioned in one of our late papers, has proceeded with the Turkish fleet under his command, to Egypt, for the purposes of consolidating the new form of government, securing the subjection of the Beys, and protecting the coasts. From the neglect which Mr. Drummond has experienced at the capital of the Ottoman Empire, there is too much reason to fear that the influence of France predominates in the court of the Grand Seignior. Alexandria has fallen into the hands of a corps of Albanian rebels, which composed part of the garrison of that important fortress, and which is esteemed the bravest body of troops in the army of the Porte. These men had, for some time, been discontented with the tardiness with which their services were rewarded, and, being unable to obtain any redress, openly revolted. They made themselves masters of the city in a few hours, and many of the inhabitants fell victims to their fury: the Pacha, however, and most of the Turkish officers, saved themselves by flight.—The Emperor of Russia attended by several of his generals, and civil officers, set out from Petersburgh, early in the last month, on a journey to Finland.—A large body, of about 20,000 Danish troops, with a large train of artillery, destined for the preservation of the neutrality of Holstein, left Copenhagen on the 21st inst. on its march for that Duchy.—A constant communication has been kept up, for some time past, between the courts of the Tuilleries and Berlin; and it is supposed, that, in consequence of some arrangements made by them, the neutrality of the Hanseatic towns will be maintained. The French generals in the countries bordering on the Elbe and the Weser, have given orders to that effect, to the troops under their command. During the continuance of the French troops in those territories, and of the blockade of the Elbe, the English Post-Office will be established at Toningen.—The States of Hanover have determined to send M. Lenthe formally to Paris as their minister. The government is now endeavouring to negotiate a loan for the payment of the contributions demanded by the French army. Gen. Mortier having established an executive commission for the government of Hanover, is about to commence a tour through

the whole electorate. Gen. Montrichard has been appointed Governor of the Duchy of Lunebourg.—A demand is said to have been made by the French government that the ports of the Austrian Monarchy should be closed against the English. This demand was, however, refused by the Emperor, who declared his resolution of observing a strict neutrality during the present war. The German Langue of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, at a chapter held at Heiternsheim, resolved to send a deputation to the Grand Master at Messina, assuring him of their respect and devotion.—A commission of state composed of two members of the Batavian government, has been appointed to go to Brussels, to compliment the First Consul, and to concert with him some measures of great importance to their Republic.—A declaration of war against Great-Britain has been issued by the Dutch, in which, after stating their various complaints against her, orders are given for reprisals against her shipping, with the exception of fishing boats. This exception is made with a hope that England will make a corresponding one in favour of the fishing trade of Holland, which has already suffered immense damage, and which, a continuation of the war will destroy.—An extraordinary sitting of the French senate was lately held, at which, the Consul Cambaceres presided, and, in consequence of some of its determinations, the Senators Lucien Buonaparté and Cornudet will immediately set out on missions of importance, one to the United Departments, and the other to Turin. Marbois, minister of the public treasure left Paris on the 3d inst. to join the First Consul, who continues his rout along the coast of Belgium. Some of the Spanish money-ships, with nearly 12 millions of dollars on board, have lately arrived at Cadiz from South America: several others, with immense treasures, are daily expected.—A new territorial division of Liguria has been published, according to which, that Republic contains 49 cantons, 705 communes, and, a population of 620,413 souls.—The King of Naples issued a declaration on the 8th inst. of his resolution to observe the most exact neutrality in the present war.—An insurrection broke out among the negroes at Warren-town, a small town in the State of North Carolina, and the inhabitants were compelled to fly.

**DOMESTIC.**—Some debates took place in Parliament during the last week: among the most important were those in the House of Commons, on the Woollen Bill, Income Tax Bill, and Irish and Scotch Army Bills,

and those in the House of Lords on the Army of Reserve and Clergy Bills. A very interesting debate also took place on the 13th inst. in the House of Commons, on the Income Tax Bill. The ministerial plan of *taxing the Funds* was opposed by Mr. Pitt in a speech of great length, and was strenuously defended by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Treasurer of the Navy. On a division of the House, 150 voted with Mr. Addington, and 50 with Mr. Pitt. The Hon. Galbraith Lowry Cole has been returned for the County of Fermanagh; and William Fitzhugh, Esq. for the Borough of Tiverton. The Secretary of War has given notice of a plan for arming the whole country.—Many of the counties of the United Kingdoms have met for the purpose of organizing measures of defence; and H. R. H. the Duke of York has addressed circular letters to the different Lord Lieutenants, giving directions for their conduct in case of an invasion. The City of Bristol and the Highland Society of Scotland, have come forward with addresses to the King assuring his Majesty of their loyalty and devotion. The Mayor and Aldermen of London have recommended the formation of volunteer corps throughout the City.—On the 10th inst. the middle tower of Westminster Abbey was set on fire, through the carelessness of some workmen who were employed in repairing it; but the exertions of the firemen prevented the flames from extending beyond that part of the edifice in which they originated.

**MILITARY.**—On the 24th ult. a courier arrived at the head quarters of Gen. Mortier, and brought, it is said, intelligence of the refusal of the King of Great Britain to ratify the capitulation of Hanover. A council of war was immediately called, and it was resolved, that the Hanoverian soldiery which had retired beyond the Elbe should be disarmed. The French troops were instantly put in motion, and the head-quarters were removed to Lunebourg, at which place the army destined for this service is first to be assembled. Eighty large embarkations were collected at Hoopt on the canal of Lunebourg, and all the vessels there, at Stadt, and at Harbourg put in requisition. The passage will be effected near Marschaep, Chasseur-vert, and Arlenbourg. Part of the army which was forming at Dewenter under the command of Gen. Desolles will assist the operations of that commanded by Gen. Mortier.—The Hanoverians are determined to oppose this **expedition**, and are making preparations for defence. They have taken a strong position on the heights of Eschebourg, and

have established a battery behind Gusthacht. Detachments are posted on the Krimmel, in the neighbourhood of Hohenhorn, and, in the environs of Hendorf, and batteries have been erected on the right bank of the Elbe. The baggage of the army has been sent to Ratzebourg.—A division of the Gallo-Italian army, composed of 12,000 men, has entered the Abruzzos, in the Neapolitan territories. Gen. Murat is daily expected at Genoa, to assemble all the troops which are spread over the Ligurian territories.—A camp of 100,000 men is said to be forming at St Omer, one of 60,000 at Cherbourg, and of 40,000 in Holland.—The embodying of the militia and the marching of them to their various present destinations proceed with all possible expedition in England, Ireland, and Scotland. Great industry is exerted in filling up the regiments of the line; and the balloting for the Army of Reserve has already commenced.

**NAVAL.**—On the 25th ult. the Hon. Capt. Paget, in the Endymion, captured, after a chase of 8 hours, the French Corvette La Bacchante of 18 12 pounders and 200 men. La Bacchante had her second captain and 7 men killed and 9 wounded. On the 29th, Capt. Dixon, in the Apollo, captured the French Brig La Dart, of 4 guns and 45 men. On the 5th inst. Capt. Wallis in the Naiad captured the French Schooner La Providence of 2 guns and 22 men, laden with cannon and ship-timber. Besides these captures, the list of which is taken from the London Gazette, many others have been made, and the prizes have been brought into our ports by different vessels cruizing against the enemy.—An English squadron was cruizing in the Road of Naples on the 23d ult. and, it was supposed, had taken possession of the Islands of Crabrera, Procida, and Ischia. Admiral Cornwallis has sent the Malta, Canopus, Sceptre, and Conqueror, to reinforce the fleet in the Mediterranean, and Sir Edward Pellew, with the Tonnant, Spartiate, and Mars, continues cruizing off Rochfort. Independent of these the channel fleet amounts to sixteen sail of the line.—On the 2d inst. the British Frigate Minerva, of 48 guns and 230 men, under the command of Capt. Bremton, run upon a rock on the French coast, and was taken. Several merchantmen from our West-India Islands have been taken by the French, and some of them have been sent into Spanish ports. Some English ships have also been recently captured by the privateers of France in the North Sea. Ninety English vessels, which were waiting there

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for convoy, have at length sailed under the protection of one of his Majesty's frigates. The French merchant ships which were on different parts of the Atlantic Ocean are daily arriving in the ports of the Republic and her allies. A fleet of 8 sail from St. Domingo, under convoy, got safely into Cadiz, and another valued at more than 7,000,000 livres into Marseilles. Their ships of war are said to have gone to the United States of America. The Dutch fleet under the command of Admiral De Winter has sailed from Ferrol for the Cape of Good Hope.—Within these few days past considerable apprehension has been excited by a report of several strange sail having been seen off the coast of Ireland; they are now said, however, to be a fleet of French merchantmen from the West-Indies bound to France.

#### SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

St. DOMINGO.—It is impossible for us now to recollect how many times the evacuation of this island, by the French, has been asserted to have taken place. At last, however, it is credible that the French party may have been evacuated; and, if it has not, it ought to be instantly destroyed, as a colony of France, an object that may be accomplished without sending to the West-Indies one additional soldier or sailor. Having been reduced, by the improvident measures of the ministers, by their conduct subsequent to the peace as well as by the peace itself, by their sins of omission as well as their sins of commission; having been thus reduced to confine all our views to the mere defence of our own homes, we seem to have forgotten what is passing in the rest of the world; wholly engrossed with the present moment, uncertain whether we are to live or die, future prospects, either of greatness or security, seem to have entirely sunk from our sight. Were not this the case St. Domingo never would have remained so long unnoticed. The commerce of this colony alone would, in a very few years, enable France to cope with us upon the sea; and, if she had remained five years at peace with us, if her insolence and impatience had not gone so far beyond all bounds, she would have had a fleet, if not equal to ours, capable, at least, of giving us very serious annoyance. St. Domingo, therefore, should be instantly blockaded, or so dealt with as to render it perfectly useless to France, not only now but at any future period, within the space of twenty or thirty years.—On this subject we beg leave to refer the

Reader to the sentiments of our correspondent in page 78.

MARINES.—The public have expressed great satisfaction at the promotion which has lately taken place in this corps, and also at the addition which has been made to the bounty for recruits. But, we are sorry to find, that in consequence of a new regulation made by the present Board of Admiralty, the marines, upon being put on shore, at sick quarters, are to have their pay reduced, at once, to *four pence* a day, instead of remaining at a shilling a day for the first twenty-eight days, as was the regulation till Lord St. Vincent was at the head of the Admiralty. The hardship, not to say cruelty, here complained of is very great indeed, and, for reasons which we forbear to state, it is peculiarly impolitic to inflict it at this time. The indignant feelings of those who have witnessed the services, and who now witness the neglect of this brave and loyal corps, it would be somewhat dangerous for us to express; but, that we amply participate in them we have no scruple to declare, and we trust, that, from some quarter or other, means will be found of counteracting the fatal influence under which the navy of Britain seems destined to perish.

CAUSES OF THE WAR.—When people take courage to look beyond the dangers of the present moment, they are puzzled to discover how this war is to end; and, this their embarrassment arises from a want of having duly considered the causes from whence it began. There was no single specific cause; nothing that could be *named*; and hence it is that the French have all along had the better of the argument. We began the war, we refused to give up Malta; these are facts, which we cannot deny; they are facts that strike the mind, and that make a lasting impression upon it. But, the real cause of the war was, as Mr. Addington expressed in his budget speech, "*the impossibility of remaining at peace*," and this impossibility arose from the ambitious views of the enemy, favoured by the vast extension of coast, left in his possession by the treaty of Amiens. When, therefore, we hear the Morning Chronicle descanting on the mediation of Russia and Prussia, we ask, what effect that mediation can have as to the result and termination of the war, unless its object is, *to change the relative situation of England and France*. The purpose of the war, as lately stated in the Morning Post, is, to *convince BUONAPARTE, that he cannot conquer this country by invasion, and, to this end, the writer says, we ought*

to have two hundred thousand men in arms. This is, too, a very fashionable notion of the object of the war; it was first put forth by the Sec. at War, and having been adopted by the minister, it, of course, became à la mode, both in town and country. But, how vain and foolish this notion is, requires but little sagacity to perceive. You fit out and send to sea as many vessels as you can man; you raise an army of two hundred thousand strong; you establish corps of sea-fencibles; you arm the whole nation cap-à-pié; and, because Buonaparté is convinced, that he cannot conquer you by force of arms, *while you are in this state of preparation*, you think he will be convinced that he cannot conquer you, *when you are no longer in that state*. This must be the opinion of those, who found their hopes on the conviction of Buonaparté; or, they must mean, that the country is *always* to maintain the naval and military force, now raised and intended to be raised; in which latter case, we shall, as Lord Folkestone, some time ago observed, sink down and die under the weight of our own armour. No; "we are at war, because we cannot be at peace;" because, the perfidious traitor, who governs France, fancies himself not to be safe, while Britain is free; because he does, and will seek our destruction; and, because, while he has Belgium and Holland in his hands, he always will possess the means of effecting that destruction, either by force of arms, or by the no less certain force of burthens laid upon the people, till they can no longer bear them. Holland, therefore, must be completely freed from his control: there must be a barrier erected between him and that republic; such a barrier as would cost him a campaign to break through, and, thereby give us time to prepare, time to augment our peace establishment; and, if the war ends, without having obtained this object, we shall be amongt those who will say, that peace, even with the loss of Malta, would have been preferable to hostilities. Holland is, as it was well described by Dr. Laurence, the principal *out-work*, of a *fortress*, of which this kingdom may be called *the body of the place*, and England the *citadel*. While this *out-work*, therefore, is in possession of the enemy, what tranquillity, what safety, can we possibly enjoy? Our ships may, indeed, continue, for some time, to go in and out unmolested; we may trade with most parts of the world; but, the *out-work* will constantly wear a threatening aspect; we can never lay down our arms, even for a day, without exposing ourselves to the consequences of an assault.

Were the anxiety, created by this state of things reciprocal, we might, indeed, then hope that mutual interest, would, finally, put an end to the evil. But, the anxiety, as well as the expense, must be all on one side. The enemy is perfectly tranquil; he loses no time, runs no risk, he lives at free quarter, and, by the very means which he employs to menace us he holds Holland in subjection and vassalage. From this post, this all-important post, this key to the heart of the British Empire, he must be dislodged; and, if there be any man, who hopes to effect this object, without a long, vigorous, and well conducted contest, we may envy him his consolatory disposition, but we must despise his understanding.

**FINANCE.** — The disgusting cant about "consols," "the market," &c. &c. is, we are happy to perceive, very fast falling into disuse; and, we cannot but hope, that the day will soon come, when such phrases as those of "magnificent receipts" and "commercial grandeur" will be banished from beneath the ancient and venerable roofs of Westminster to the mansions of those Lords, whose transitory honours are derived from the favours of Mammon. The London news-printers, however, find it very difficult to lay aside their long-indulged habits; and, being, in general, stock-jobbers themselves, no small portion of their immense columns is occupied with lamentations at the fall of the English funds, while those of France continue to rise. This is a consequence, not of our situation, not of the physical force, with which the enemy menaces our shores, not of the real danger which exists with respect to our government and country; but, of the imaginary danger, the absence of imaginary security, the want of confidence, of that confidence, of which Lord Hawkesbury boasted, as one of the principal means of resisting the power of France. This consequence, which we, long ago, said would arise out of the peace of Amiens, is a mark, not of our want of *ability*, but of our want of *will*, to defend our interests and our honour. Mr. Pitt put our "increase of wealth" into the scale against the extension of French territory, and the glory of French arms; but, as we observed, in remarking upon the speech, to which we now allude, a nation, which sets more value upon its wealth than upon its valour, will never be even a rich nation for any great length of time; because, the men of money, who are, as to their own private concerns, the most cunning of all creatures, will always remove their dearly beloved treasure to the place of the greatest security, to the place where there

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J U L Y

is the greatest degree of physical force animated by the greatest degree of courage. "Credit, capital, and confidence," did, indeed, previously to the French revolution, depend more upon the moral than the military character of a nation. When from wars little else was expected than victories, and defeats; and when treaties of peace generally turned upon the abandonment of a pretension, the recognition of a right, or, extended, at farthest, to the demolition of a fortress, or the transfer of a province or a colony; then, indeed, public credit, in the nations of Europe, depended upon the moral character and pecuniary means of the governments of those nations respectively; but, now that the existence of the governments themselves depends upon the result of the war, when peace is seldom made without bartering a nation, now men of wealth, particularly if that wealth be *moveable*, will, if obliged to choose amongst belligerent nations, give the preference to that, which they regard as being the strongest and most brave; and, however mortifying the fact may be, it is nevertheless a fact, that, since the alarm of invasion has prevailed, considerable sums have been sold out of the English funds for the purpose of purchasing therewith into the funds of France.—When, on this subject, we, some time ago, stated, that the direct tax upon the funds, proposed to be collected at the Bank, must be regarded as "*a breach of national faith*," unless it could be clearly made out, that such a tax was necessary to the existence of the state, we were loudly censured by many persons, and particularly by the political friends of Mr. Pitt. What, then, must have been the mortification of those persons to hear this "*mischievous statement*" (for such it was called) confirmed by Mr. Pitt himself, who, in the debate of the 13th instant, declared that the tax on the funds "was a violation "of a positive compact with the public creditor, and, in his opinion, gave the first "blow to public credit." He desired it to be remembered, "that there was not a loan "which had been made, in which Parliament had not pledged itself, that the interest should be paid *without any deduction*." That these are almost the very words, which we made use of, on this subject, on the 18th of June, will be seen by referring to Vol. III. p. 918. Mr. Pitt, said, too, that, the present tax "was, certainly "small, but, that, if the principle was "once established, the proportion might easily "be extended, and if it was once admitted, "that the interest for a new loan might be "provided by deducting from the interest

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"which had been stipulated to be paid for "an old one, he should be glad to know "upon what terms government could expect to borrow money in future." With respect to the *extending of the proportion*, it was a prominent idea of our own, where we stated, that the 5 per centum now laid upon the interest was only a small beginning in the good work, which was finally to relieve us from that mill-stone, which has so long been sinking us, deeper and deeper, into every species of disgrace.—Here, however, we disagree with Mr. Pitt, who does not seem to regard the tax upon the funds as *necessary to the salvation of the state*; whereas, we regard the destruction of the monarchy as certain, unless the funded debt be annihilated; and this cannot, as far as we are able to perceive, be conveniently and effectually done, except by a tax, a direct and unequivocal tax, upon the funds; or, in other words, a deduction from the interest due to individuals on the capital stock. We hear a terrible out-cry, excited by this opinion; but we despise this sort of clamour and abuse as much as we did the howling of the mob, when they broke our windows, because we refused to rejoice at the peace. We are fully persuaded, that our opinion is correct. It is the result of long thinking upon the subject; and has now been communicated to our readers not from any factious or party motive, but from a desire gradually to prepare them for an event, which we regard as at no great distance, and which, if it came upon the country all at once, and totally unexpected, might be productive of infinite mischief, but which, if anticipated, and if met with only common fortitude, cannot fail to raise this nation to a degree of power and glory that it never before attained. It is very natural for Mr. Pitt to express his wishes that Parliament "will not overturn that *edifice*, which it has "erected with so much pains;" and, he might have added, with so much national shame and disgrace. The Right Honourable Gentleman well knows, that this edifice must be his sepulchral monument, or, that there will not be a stone to tell where he lies. We do not say, or insinuate, that he is actuated by selfishness, in this or in any other part of his conduct; but, it is evident, that, in the fate of the funding system, his present reputation and influence, as well as his future fame, are deeply, if not exclusively, interested. In war and in negotiation he has failed; in oratory he shines transcendent, but mere oratory, unaccompanied with wise plans and successful measures, is, assuredly, not the sort of merit by which he would de-

sire to be known to posterity.—Let it not be said, that we, by the promulgation of these sentiments, create despondency in the country; for, neither our wishes nor our actions have any such tendency. Those, on the contrary, who insist, that the existence of the nation depends upon the existence of the debt, are the persons who are most likely to plunge their hearers in despair; for, every man, however great his confidence in the solidity of the funds, believes that they must fail first or last; and, therefore, if he also believes that the fate of the nation is interwoven with that of the funds, how great, if he loves his country, must be his anxiety! A man, so believing, must view a depreciating stock table with the same sort of emotion that agitates the sick clown when he hears the ticking of the death-watch. “I would,” says the author of the *Pursuits of Literature*, “I would inculcate one truth with peculiar earnestness, namely, that a revolution is NOT the necessary consequence of national bankruptcy.” This is the truth, which we inculcate, with all the earnestness in our power; and, we entertain a well-grounded hope of seeing it, at no very distant period, universally prevail.

**DEFENCE OF THE COUNTRY.**—During the same evening, on which the debate took place, relative to the tax upon the funds, the Secretary at War gave notice, that he should postpone, 'till Monday next, his motion for leave to bring in a bill for a further arming of the country; upon which Mr. Pitt rose, and, in a short speech, expressed his impatience at the procrastination of his Majesty's ministers. To this Mr. Addington replied, that no one could be more anxious than ministers were to hasten every measure connected with the defence of the country; but that, a bill such as it was now intended to introduce, “ought not to be brought forward in a *crude* and *imperfect state*; it was too gigantic to be so dealt with; and, he was in hopes, that, in the end, much time would have been saved by the present apparent delay, because the less imperfect the measure might be, when brought forward, the more expeditiously would it pass through Parliament.” This reply was a very good one, only it must have sounded extremely ridiculous from the lips of Mr. Addington, who had so lately brought in a bill, necessarily much less complicated than the present, which bill, before it passed into a law, underwent so complete a metamorphosis, that it, at last, changed its very name. It must be confessed, however, that the minister would have proved himself “a

“hardened sinner” indeed, if he had not profited from such lesson; and, it really does appear a little unreasonable, that, after the derision, to which the ministers so lately exposed themselves in complaisance to Mr. Pitt, they should be so soon scolded for not again placing themselves in a similar predicament. The Conscription Bill originated with Mr. Pitt, who defended it as it at first stood, and who led the ministry into the whole of their conduct, respecting it, which conduct was certainly the most childish that ever was exhibited in any assembly of grown persons of either sex. After such an instance of the fallibility of Mr. Pitt; after feeling so severely the consequences of yielding a blind acquiescence to his will; no one will deny, that the ministers did well to pause before they brought forward another military measure dictated by him, especially a measure which is to have an influence so great and extensive as to affect, directly and even personally, almost every family and every man in the kingdom. The charge of dilatoriness, of neglect of duty, does, we think, come with rather a bad grace from Mr. Pitt, who suffered all the former part of the session of parliament to slide away, without one single day's attendance, while the news-papers more immediately under the controul of his friends, were continually rejoicing at his excellent health. That the war found the country in a wretched state of defence, or rather of exposure, is most certain; and, that the work of calling out and augmenting our force has hitherto gone most slowly, feebly, and inefficiently on, must be allowed; but, though we, though all the small party (and small, indeed, it was) who condemned the peace of Amiens, and who insisted that it could not last a year, without producing the utter ruin of England; though we have a right to complain of the dismantling, and disbanding system, and of the tardy and reluctant conduct of ministers; those who applauded the peace, those who defended it, and especially those who assisted to *make* it, as was the case with Mr. Pitt, have, we insist, no reason whatever to complain of any deficiency that may now exist with respect to military and naval means. Mr. Pitt defended the peace chiefly upon the principle of *economy*; and how was that economy to be practised, without retrenching the expenses of war? And how were these retrenchments to be effected, without diminishing the strength of the fleet and the army? He wished the treasure of the nation “not to be LAVISHED AWAY in continuing a contest with the

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"certainty of ENORMOUS expense!!!" (1) How many are there who now wish that they had been dumb at the time when the peace of Amiens was discussed! If, then, Mr. Pitt approved of the peace, because it put an end to enormous expense, he must have anticipated and approved of those measures, by which alone a diminution of that expense could be accomplished, and by which the country has been reduced to its present situation.—"Not be *lavished away* in continuing a contest with the "certainty of an enormous expense!!!" What a reason! What a reason for making peace! After having applauded a peace made on a principle like this, well may the poor deluded people be ashamed to talk of again going to war! It was this sordid, this base and groveling principle, that pervaded the whole of the transaction; that sunk the people in their own esteem; that made them patiently submit to what their forefathers would have spurned at; that broke their spirit, killed their pride, and rendered disgrace familiar to them. No man, therefore, who approved of the treaty of Amiens, and who *still persists* in that approbation, can have any right to censure the ministers for the evils which have therefrom arisen, and which never can be cured, till the principles, on which that disgraceful and infamous compact was made are explicitly disavowed, and universally exploded.—As to the bill, now about to be submitted to the Parliament, relative to a further arming of the country, we can say nothing, not being acquainted with any of its provisions, or with its out-line, or even with the principle on which it proceeds. As, however, a general arming and training has been mentioned, we lose no time in stating our opinion, that such a measure will fail of its object. What is every body's business is nobody's business; and, the government may be assured, that an attempt to *enforce* a general training will be productive of general discontent and general confusion, but of no one circumstance tending to repel foreign hostility or to preserve domestic quiet. A *partial*, and, in some degree, *optional* arming and training, is much better than a general and compulsory call upon the people: by the former, a great number of men, fond of arms, would be soon collected; by the latter a greater number would be brought out to a *muster*, but they would come like truants "lagging unwillingly to school;" they would slip away the moment they

perceived an opportunity; while they remained all would be noise and nonsense; in short, every thing appertaining to the scheme would be so ridiculous, that it must, even in a few weeks, fall of itself into contempt and disuse. We do not want to see the rabbles that would arise out of an attempt to enforce a general training: we have seen them; and, to use a phrase somewhat vulgar, if it please God to spare our eye-sight, we wish never to see them again. The militia of Pennsylvania is founded upon a system of general training: every man, from 18 to 50 belongs, and *always* belongs, to the militia. This *force* used to make an admirable figure *upon paper*; it amounted to seventy or eighty thousand men; but, when a very small number of these men were wanted to quell an insurrection, the *refusal to march was unanimous*; and, the legislature was assembled to pass a law, for the purpose of providing *bounties* for volunteers, and for raising, by *ballot*, the number of men not supplied by the means of recruiting.—The best way of raising men is by the sound of the drum; the next best by conscription or ballot; and the next, by partial and voluntary enrollment, at stated times, merely for the purposes of training, but always under *officers appointed by the government*. Besides these ways of creating and raising a military force, we know of none that does not vex and disgust the people, that is not perfectly useless, and, in many cases, dangerous to the state.—Some parts of the plan, now about to be brought forward, should have in view the defence of the country, at the present time; but it should have a steady eye to the rendering of the people of this kingdom a *military people*; for a *military people* we must become, or we must be slaves; there is no other alternative; no Sunday schools, no soup-shops, no canting philanthropic societies; nothing will any longer save us from the use of arms, or, from the wearing of chains. A law, therefore, which is intended to further this mighty purpose, should be maturely considered: it should go slowly through the Cabinet, and still more slowly through the Parliament; it should receive the aid of all the sagacity and all the experience of the country, and, above all things, it should be founded upon a principle of *longevity*, looking forward, not only to a long war, but to a military age; not only to our present protection, but to the safety and the honour of our children. "Carthage," says Montesquieu, "which made war with its opulence against the poverty of Rome, laboured, from that

(1) See Debates, Register, Vol. II. p. 1143.

" cause, under a great disadvantage: gold and silver passeth away; but the strength and fortitude of poverty nothing can destroy. The Romans were ambitious from pride, the Carthaginians from avarice; the one wished to command, the other to acquire; and these latter, constantly calculating the receipt and expenditure, always sighed for peace while they were making war. Commercial states may long subsist in mediocrity; but their grandeur is of short duration. They rise, little by little, without being perceived: but, when the wealth of such a nation has swelled to a magnitude no longer to be hidden, every other nation seeks to deprive her of that which she has acquired, if not clandestinely, at least without any of those deeds, which constitute the merit of nations."—Before truths like these how the vaunting estimates of financiers shrink into nothingness! Duly impressed with these solemn and fearful truths, we turn from Mr. Pitt's "commercial greatness," from the "splendid assets" of Lord Castlereagh, from the "magnificent receipts" of Lord Auckland, with a loathing hardly to be described. No; it is neither by trade nor by money that we can be saved; but by men and arms; and, it is a truth that never can be too often repeated, that we must become a military people, or we must become slaves.

**FRENCH BISHOPS.**—Referring to what we said, in our last, the wicked attempt, made by the London news-printers, to excite public hatred and violence against the French Bishops and other emigrants, we have now only to make one or two additional observations.—The London Editors (all, we believe, without one single exception,) had asserted, that "the French Bishops, who had been FED in this country for so many years, were now, in France, putting up prayers for the success of Buonaparté, and for the destruction of England." In reply to which, we stated, and we proved, that, out of nineteen French Bishops, who had been protected here, during the revolution, only five had returned to France, and that, of these five, one was dead, so that, out of the nineteen, it was impossible that more than four could have put up prayers of the description mentioned by the London Editors. But, upon a very strict examination of the *Moniteur*, we find, that only one of the four has, on the subject of the present war, uttered any thing that has found its way into print; and, moreover, that what has been uttered by that one contains not a

single expression any otherwise hostile to England than as it is a prayer for the preservation and success of France. So that, it now evidently appears, that these news editors have been actuated by the most diabolical malignity against men, from whom it is scarcely possible they can ever have received any injury, whom they have, perhaps never seen, and of whom they can know nothing, even from report, except that they are persons distinguished for their loyalty and their piety.—It is truly curious to hear these editors slandering the emigrants, while they affect to regard with horror the rebellion and usurpation of Buonaparté! The truth is, they do not dislike Buonaparté for his treasons against his Sovereign so much as for his hostility against them and their Presses. This latter crime it is for which they hate him, and for which they would kill him, if they could do it without risk to their own persons.—The gross absurdities, into which they have fallen on this and some other subjects have induced their rivals in France to suspect, that they are inflicted with insanity; and, really, when one looks back over their columns, published since the dread of invasion has prevailed, and particularly since it has been known that Buonaparté has marked them out for the Cayenne Diligence, there does appear abundant reason to apprehend, that terror has affected their intellects, as well as those of certain persons in the City, who, for the present, shall be nameless, and who, if any judgment is to be formed from their language, are certainly deranged.

**MR. SHERIDAN.**—It is with no small degree of surprise, that we see Mr. Sheridan persevere in his senatorial silence. The public will remember what cheering was bestowed on this gentleman for the "English feeling" which he discovered, at the time when his Majesty's message of the 7th of March was communicated to Parliament; and, it will also remember, we trust, with indignation, the base use which the news-papers made of a reply, which he made to Mr. Windham, accusing that gentleman with want of spirit and with disheartening the country. Let the public now draw a comparison between the conduct of Mr. Sheridan and that of Mr. Windham. Not a word does the former say, at this dangerous crisis; not a word; while the latter is constantly in his place, constantly attentive to his duty, constantly lending all the weight of his talents and his name to every measure calculated to defend and preserve the interest and honour of the country. This is, indeed, no more than his Sovereign and his Country, expect, and have a right to expect, at his hands. But, how then, will the patriots Fox and Grey, answer to that Sovereign, and that Country for their present conduct? Do they keep aloof, because they cannot venture to oppose measures, absolutely necessary to the existence of the nation? Do they lie by, for a *reverse of fortune*?